



MFC News

Caring for the Trees and Forests of Mississippi Since 1926

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The Mississippi Forestry Commission provides equal employment opportunities and services to all individuals regardless of disability, race, age, religion, color, gender, national origin, or political affiliation.

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More Traditions

United States: American Citizens often celebrate with a party featuring toasting, drinking and fireworks late into the night before the New Year, where the gathering counts down the final seconds to January 1st. Some might even get a kiss at midnight. Many English speaking countries play “Auld Lang Syne,” a song celebrating the year’s happy moments. Americans often make resolutions and watch the Time Square Ball drop in New York City. Although much of this celebration occurs the night before, the merrymaking typically continues to New Year’s Day. Football is a common fixture on New Year’s Day in America, usually the day of the Rose Bowl. Some foods considered “lucky” to eat during the festivities include:

- Circular shaped foods
- Black-eyed peas
- Cabbage
- Pork

Newsletter Deadlines

All submissions are welcome. Photographs are encouraged (although space limitations may curtail inclusion). Items must be received by the **10th of the month** to be included in the next month’s issue. E-mail submissions (*in Microsoft Word*) and photos to

lharris@mfc.state.ms.us

or mail to:

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Happy New Year!!!

New Year’s Day is a national holiday celebrated on January 1st, the first day of the New Year, following both the Gregorian and the Julian calendar. This holiday is often marked by fireworks, parades, and reflection upon the last year while looking ahead to the future’s possibilities. Many people celebrate New Year’s in the company of loved ones, involving traditions meant to bring luck and success in the upcoming year.

Holiday History: Early New Year’s Celebrations

New Year’s is one of the oldest holidays still celebrated, but the exact date and nature of the festivities has changed over time. The earliest recorded festivities in honor of a new year’s arrival date back some 4,000 years to ancient Babylon. For the Babylonians, the first new moon following the vernal equinox—the day in late March with an equal amount of sunlight and darkness—heralded the start of a new year. They marked the occasion with a massive religious festival called Akitu (derived from the Sumerian word for barley, which was cut in the spring) that involved a different ritual on each of its 11 days. In addition to the new year, Akitu celebrated the mythical victory of the Babylonian sky god Marduk over the evil sea goddess Tiamat and served an important political purpose: It

was during this time that a new king was crowned or that the current ruler’s divine mandate was symbolically renewed.

Throughout antiquity, civilizations around the world developed increasingly sophisticated calendars, typically pinning the first day of the year to an agricultural or astronomical event. In Egypt, for instance, the year began with the annual flooding of the Nile, which coincided with the rising of the star Sirius. The first day of the Chinese new year, meanwhile, occurred with the second new moon after the winter solstice.

It originated thousands of years ago in ancient Babylon, celebrated as an eleven day festival on the first day of spring. During this time, many cultures used the sun and moon cycle to decide the “first” day of the year. It wasn’t until Julius Caesar implemented the Julian calendar that January 1st became the common day for the celebration.

The content of the festivities has varied as well. While early celebrations were more paganistic in nature, celebrating Earth’s cycles, Christian tradition celebrates the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ on New Year’s Day. Roman Catholics also often celebrate Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, a feast honoring Mary. However, in the twentieth century, the holiday grew into its

own celebration and mostly separated from the common association with religion.

It has become a holiday associated with nationality, relationships, and introspection rather than a religious celebration, although many people do still follow older traditions.

Traditions

While celebration varies all over the world, common traditions include:

1. **Making resolutions or goals to improve one’s life.** Common resolutions concern diet, exercise, bad habits, and other issues concerning personal wellness. A common view is to use the first day of the year as a clean slate to improve one’s life.
2. **A gathering of loved ones.** Here you’ll typically find champagne, feasting, confetti, noise makers, and other methods of merriment.
3. **Fireworks, parades, concerts.** Famous parades include London’s New Year’s Day Parade and the Rose Parade in Pasadena, California.
4. **Superstitions concerning food or visitors to bring luck.** This especially includes circle-shaped foods, which symbolize cycles. The reasoning behind superstitions is that the first

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(Continued from page 2, *Happy New Year's!!!*)

day of the year sets precedent for the following days. A common superstition specific to New Year's Day concerns a household's first visitor of the year—tradition states that if a tall, dark-haired stranger is the first to walk through your door, called the First Footer or Lucky

Bird, you'll have good luck all year. Also, if you want to subscribe to superstition, don't let anything leave the house on New Year's, except for people. Tradition says: don't take out the trash and leave anything you want to take out of the house on New Year's outside the night before. If you must remove something, make sure to replace it by bringing an

item into the house. These policies of balance apply in other areas as well—avoiding paying bills, breaking anything, or shedding tears.

5. **Toasting.** Toasts typically concern gratefulness for the past year's blessings, hope and luck or the future, and thanking guests for their New Year's company.

How To Start The New Year Fresh

Edited by Teresa, Puddy, Glutted, Bigforehead and 5 others.

When the holiday season comes to an end and all the festivities are over, you're left with a new year. It can be a time to set in place new things to learn and do or it can be a time of consolidation of things you're already passionately pursuing. Another alternative might be to simply contemplate where you've reached in life so far. Whatever your preferred approach to the New Year, it's nice to start feeling refreshed and focused, ready to get back into things you're working on or to get started on new things. Here are a few ideas to give you a boost.

1. **Put away the holiday decorations in a timely manner.** When the holiday festivities are over, the decorations, ornaments and other festive trappings can be popped back into their boxes

and bags. If you leave this too long, it can feel like a chore and can also have the effect of holding you back from moving into the next experiences. Ask family and friends to help tidy away the seasonal decorations to make it easier.

2. **Look over your New Year's Resolution list.** (If you haven't made one, skip this step.) Write the list out on a planner, chart or calendar where you can make notes. In order to get your resolutions underway, it's probable that you'll need to do some planning and organizing, and perhaps even some purchasing. It helps your focus to make notes and lists to direct your efforts in starting new habits. For example:

- Is there any gear, equipment, food, clothing, etc. needed to start your new fitness/eating/exercise regime? Or

perhaps you need new hobby or craft materials or new sports gear. Write down the needed items so that you can work out whether you already have what's needed or need to buy, beg, borrow or freecycle it.

- Do you need to book memberships, travel, subscriptions or any other service to aid the resolution? If so, write this down too.
- Write down anything else of relevance, alongside those resolutions.
- In some cases, breaking down the goals into short term and long term milestones is necessary to ensure you don't flag in your willpower. Write down any milestones you think will work for

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January's Birthdays



Nelson Hearn -1
 Darrell Dickerson -3
 Howard Stogner -4
 Patricia Montgomery -5
 Erma Steed -5
 Randall Arnold -6
 Michael Randazzo -8
 Jerime Howard -10
 Steven Prescott -13
 Mark Kelly -14
 Billie Owen -14
 Kent Hailey -15
 Faye Phippen -15
 Sandra Ford -16
 Phyllis Vining -18
 Jeffrey Howell -21
 Michael Price -22
 Colin Ladner -26
 Pamela Pace -26
 Marcia Stark -27
 Braxton Boswell -30
 Eric Gonyea -30
 Derrick Washington -30
 William Crenshaw -31
 Mark Tigner -31



More Traditions

France: The French typically celebrate New Year's with a feast and a champagne toast, marking the first moments of New Year's Day with kisses under the mistletoe. The French also consider the day's weather as a forecast for the upcoming year's harvest, taking into account aspects like wind direction to predict the fruitfulness of crops and fishing.

SAY HELLO TO OUR

NEW HIRES

- ☺ Justin Jacobs, Forest Ranger, Clarke County, SCD
- ☺ Pauline Johnson, Forest Ranger, Forrest County, SED
- ☺ Sherri Coleman, Admin Assistant, George County, SED
- ☺ Steven Prescott, Forest Ranger, Forrest County, SED
- ☺ Mickey P. Chisolm, Forest Ranger, Holmes County, NWD
- ☺ Nicholas Hancock, Forester Trainee, Leflore County, NWD
- ☺ Jimmy L. Randolph, Forest Ranger, Lee County, NED

Retirement NEXT EXIT ➔

- ☺ John Locke, Assistance District Forester, Rankin County, CD
- ☺ Charlie W. Bass, Jeff Davis County, SWD

Tree Knowledge - Who Am I? for December 2013 was the Spruce Pine.

Check out page 17 in the Mississippi Trees book.



Tree Knowledge - Who Am I?

Leaves:

Type: pinnately compound, alternate, deciduous

Size: 7.0" - 14.0" long; leaflets (7-9), 4.0" - 5.0" long, 1.0" - 1.5" wide

Margin: coarsely serrate

Apex: acuminate

Base: cuneate or rounded (equal-unequal)

Shape: ovate-lanceolate to broadly obovate

Color: dark green above; silvery white below

Surface: glabrous above; slightly pubescent, lustrous below

Venation: pinnate

Twigs:

Size: slender

Color: brown to bronze

Surface: densely scaly

Buds:

Size: 0.16" - 0.24" long

Shape: ovoid

Color: bronze

Surface: densely scaly; scales valvate

Fruit and Flowers:

Nut: husk 4-ridged to the base; ridges broad and thick; 1.5" long; yellow-brown; scurfy pubescence; thin (0.03")

Size: 1.0" long; 0.75" wide

Shape: ellipsoidal or slightly obovoid

Color: dark reddish brown; variegated

with gray at the ends

Flower: monoecious; unisexual; staminate, catkin, dark brown scurfy pubescence, yellow anthers,

3.0" - 4.0" long; pistillate, oblong, narrowed ends; slightly 4-angled, thick, brown, scurfy pubescence

Bark: dark brown tinged with red; irregularly broken into small thin appressed scales

Physical Attributes:

Form: single stem

Size: 95.0', mature

Growth Rate: slow; 30.0' maximum @ 20 yrs

Life Span: moderate (>50 yrs)

Tolerances:

Shade: intolerant

Drought: low

Fire: high

Habitat and Ecology:

Site: banks of rivers and swamps in rich moist soil, or rarely on higher ground

Soil Texture: fine - coarse

Soil pH: 4.5 - 6.5

Range: scattered in a few areas in eastern South Carolina, central Alabama and Mississippi, northern Louisiana, southern Arkansas, eastern Texas,

and northern Mexico; abundant only near Selma, AL, and in southern Arkansas; in Mississippi, reported by the NRCS Plants Database in the counties of Oktibbeha, Noxubee, and Jasper - likely in other counties especially in the Blackland Prairie.

Wildlife Value and Uses:

nuts relished by squirrel - begin cutting them while they are still green; also eaten by other rodents and wildlife.

Timber Value and Uses:

too scattered and rare to be of significant economic value; not distinguished from other hickories when harvesting.

Landscaping Info:

attractive bark; handles a wide range of soil textures; available commercially; negative is slow growth; should be preserved in landscape when found and identified for protection, as it is a rare tree.

Other Facts:

rarest species in the genus

Who Am I?



Congratulations!!!

Justin Dewberry, Mississippi Forestry Commission Service Forester for Marshall and Benton Counties, has been named Regional Tree Farm Inspector of the Year by the American Tree Farm System.

Justin was the winner of the Mississippi Tree Farm Inspector of the Year in both 2012 and 2013 and was nominated for Regional by Garron Hicks, Northeast Mississippi District Chair.

The national winner will be announced in February.

New SED Tree Farm Chairman

Jack Camp, Lamar County Service Forester will be the Southeast District Tree Farm Chairman, taking over from Mark Hamilton.

PawPaw, The Bear

I just wanted to share what a Kosciusko citizen had to say about Smokey and the picture she took. Mandy Harrell, Administrative Assistant, Attala County.

"This bear means so much to me and my family!! This was our pawpaw for many, many years and us 7 girls use to ride this float with him singing and dancing. The joy this bear (or might I say the man behind this bear) has brought to our family is so indescribable and at the same time so incredible! We love you forever pawpaw and Smokey the bear!!"



Even More Traditions!!!

Philippines: In the Philippines, celebrations are very loud, believing that the noise will scare away evil beings. There is often a midnight feast featuring twelve different round fruits to symbolize good luck for the twelve months of the year. Other traditional foods include sticky rice and noodles, but not chicken or fish because these animals are food foragers, which can be seen as bad luck for the next year's food supply.



- ♦ Travis Stewart, Forester, Amite County, SWD
- ♦ David A. Ferguson, Forest Ranger, Attala County, ECD
- ♦ Marty D. Meredith, Forest Ranger, Tate County, NWD
- ♦ Donyell Hemphill, Forest Ranger, Leflore County, NWD
- ♦ Stacie Fox, Admin Assistant, Copiah, Claiborne & Warren Counties, CD
- ♦ Tim Reed, Forestry Technician, Winston County, ECD
- ♦ Brent Ladner, Forest Ranger, Hancock County, SED
- ♦ Terrica Randle, Emergency Telecommunicator, Lee County, NED
- ♦ Alexis A. Harvey, Forester, SED, Hancock & Harrison Counties, SED
- ♦ Robert Rosamond, Forest Ranger, Jackson County, SED

More Traditions

Greece: Greeks celebrate New Year's Day with card games and feasting. At midnight, the lights are turned off, followed by the Basil's Pie, which contains a coin. Whoever gets the piece of pie containing the coin wins luck for the next year.

2013 Forest Products Values Improve, Gain Momentum

By Keri Collins Lewis, MSU Ag Communications

MISSISSIPPI STATE – Mississippi's forest products bounced back into the No. 2 spot in the state's list of agricultural commodities based on annual production values.

James Henderson, associate Extension professor in the Mississippi State University College of Forest Resources, estimated the state's forest products 2013 harvest value to be \$1.17 billion, compared to the 2012 value of \$1.02 billion. That is a 14.6 percent increase over the 2012 harvest. Final figures will be available in February.

Notably, the 2013 harvest value is 34.9 percent higher than the 2009 harvest value of \$864.9 million, which was the lowest valued harvest year since the recession of 2007 to 2009.

"The increase can be attributed to several factors, including an increase in timber harvesting because of slightly higher prices," Henderson said.

"Severance taxes collected on timber sales are up 4.4 percent as of October, compared to the same period for 2012."

Henderson reported stumpage for pine pulpwood is up 19.9 percent, hardwood pulpwood is up 32.6 percent, pine sawtimber is up 4.2 percent, oak sawtimber is up 11.6 percent and mixed hardwood sawtimber is up 11.6 percent.

The demand for Mississippi's forest products is tied to the U.S. housing market, especially new home construction. Though the recent spike in

end of 2012, existing home sales are up 11 percent and new home sales are up 13 percent.

With inventories of homes for sale still below those typically found in a healthy housing market, new home construction is expected to increase in 2014.

Henderson said the closure of the International Paper mill in Courtland, Ala. has implications for the pulpwood market in north Mississippi.

"Given the capacity of the International Paper mill, demand in part of north Mississippi probably will be cut by at least half," Henderson said.

David Jones, forest products specialist with the MSU Extension Service and associate professor in the MSU Forest and Wildlife Research Center's Department of Sustainable Bioproducts, said he expects 2014 to be on par with 2013.

"2013 has been good for forest products, an upswing year, and I expect to see a continual increase in the state's lumber production," Jones said. "We had a couple of mills close, but one is scheduled to reopen in 2014 after a change in ownership."

The biofuels industry remains an unknown factor.

"No one is sure what the impact of the biofuels industry will be, other than the creation of some additional



Forest products reclaim the No. 2 spot in Mississippi's list of agricultural commodities, with a preliminary year-end harvest value estimated at \$1.17 billion, a 14.6 percent increase from 2012. (Photo by MSU Office of Ag Communications/Keri Collins Lewis)

mortgage interest rates cooled the housing market somewhat, Henderson expects continued growth in the housing market and the overall economy.

"The trend remains positive -- housing starts are 19 percent higher than this time in 2012," he said.

Existing and new home sales are also on an upward trend. Compared to the

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jobs," Jones said. "A couple of biofuels companies are entering the market in the state, and they started construction and research in 2013. They may be up and operating by mid-2014."

An increase in domestic demand fueled the industry in 2013, while the export market remained stable. Jones said most of the export growth has been in the Asian markets.

"We sold some logs to China early in 2013, but it's not as big of a market for us as for the West Coast because of transportation costs," he said. "Many Asian countries are starting to use more wood in their construction practices, so we may see more growth in that sector."

As with other agricultural products, weather will determine the next few months' activity.

"Mills are keeping appropriate amounts of inventory in stock now, but we could see a repeat of what happened in early 2013, when it was too wet for loggers to get trees out of the woods and sawmills had to shut down," Jones said. "So we'll be watching the weather to see if the hardwood mills can sustain lumber production through the winter."

Forest products have been listed in the top three most valuable agricultural commodities in the state for more than 25 years. This year forest products are second only to the poultry industry's \$2.72 billion predicted year-end value.

Forestry, with a total estimated value of \$1.17 billion, ranked No. 2 in the state. The current total estimated 2013 year-end value of all commodities is \$7.35 billion. Final figures will be determined in February.

Forest Commission Has A Number of Goals

By STEVE MCCALL, Special to the Sun Herald, November 30, 2013

Maintenance crews for sports venues only have to worry about the 120 yards (including end zones) of a football field, the 400 plus feet to center-field of a baseball diamond, the 94 feet of a basketball court, 200 feet of a hockey rink, etc.

But for those who oversee Mississippi's forest lands for outdoor enthusiasts, the job is much bigger, taking care of some 19.8 million acres.

It's a big task to be sure which is why the Mississippi Forestry Commission has been enlisting the help of private citizens in its Forest Stewardship Program since 1991. It's a program aimed

at managing forestlands, helping owners maintain the land in a beneficial way, and for the future.

"It's a program where we help landowners with guidelines to help them preserve their property for a

number of reasons," Meacham Harlow, southern outreach officer the Mississippi Forestry Commission said. "All they've got to do, is go along with everything we have laid out for them."

There are a number of objectives the forestry commission lays out in its stewardship program. Among those are timber production; wildlife; recreation; aesthetics; environmental education; water quality; ecological and site

restoration; and air quality.

Landowners who wish to take part in the stewardship program must own at least 10 acres and plan on carrying out a minimum of two of the objectives.

Stewardship helps the state maintain its forest lands against predatory insects such as the southern pine beetle, which in epidemic years has wiped out thousands of acres. The forest commission also helps stewards prevent fire, limit the damage from climate change, and contain threats from invasive vegetation such as kudzu, privet, cogon grass and others.

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Biomass Is It A Realist Source Of Bioenergy And Biofuels

By R.J. Rousseau, Extension Specialist. From *The Overstory*, Volume 2, Issue 4, November 2013, College of Forest Resources Extension Forestry.

Since the 1970s, the 50 million dollar question concerning renewable energy has been "Is it even possible, and if so, will it fit into our current energy system". Today, the focus of renewable energy and fuel production is three-fold in that it needs to be energy dense, economically viable, and environmentally friendlier in the replacement of the dwindling supply of fossil fuels. There is no doubt that renewables face a daunting task, which includes not only the replacement of fossil fuels that possess an extremely high energy source, but the need to be economically viable and environmentally superior. Biomass is one source of renewable energy that includes hydroelectric, solar, and wind. However, biomass is the only source that could be used for both electrical and fuel production. Today, co-generation of wood in coal plants provides a cleaner feedstock helping to reduce carbon emissions in electrical production. Biomass is also being used in the production of bio-crude. KiOR in Columbus, MS is producing a bio-crude from loblolly pine through a pyrolysis process that capitalizes on the lignin content of the trees. The bio-crude is placed into a petro-chemical plant and transformed into jet fuel, green gasoline, and other fuel type products. Hybrid poplars are being used to produce ethanol by ZeaChem Inc. in the Pacific Northwest. This process is

different from KiOR in that it uses both cellulose as well as lignin for the production of ethanol. While these two examples are leading the efforts in production of transportation fuel from biomass, the overall progress in the more advanced 2nd-generation biofuels process has been rather slow.

The one area of biomass that has seen exceptional growth has been the pellet market. This recent increase in the pellet market results from legislation in Europe that greatly limits the use of coal for electrical and home heating. Recent estimates show a dramatic increase in pellet production throughout the southern United States, as new pellet plant construction has become nearly common place, with consumption rivaling that of large pulp and paper mills (i.e. 1 million tons/year). Prior to the 2010, the feedstock of choice for pellet production was dry secondary wood sources as this material was considered waste. However, with the marked tonnage increase for pellets, roundwood has become the most obvious choice. The problem of using this type of raw material is the added expense of drying the wood. Most pellet plants are quick to point out that their feedstock consists of wood that has either very low or no market value. This includes trees that exhibit stems that are poorly formed, excessively knotty, crooked, and hollow as well as large tops and limbs, in-woods chipping, commercial thinnings, and mill residues and waste. Realistically, the market

will determine what types of wood will form the bulk of the pellet market. The woody biomass sources that have been identified in the past include:

- a. Thinning operations of either natural stands or plantations
- b. Timber stand improvement (TSI)
- c. Dedicated energy plantations
- d. Final harvests (small trees, logging residue, large limbs, and tops)

It is expected that a change in the Renewable Fuel Standards will greatly restrict the research of 2nd-generation biofuels thus further delaying the production that will be needed for the future of the United States. While no one is sure what fuels will be needed in the future, the ability to have options provides us with a greater base to obtain our national goals.



Biofuels And The Forest Landowner

By John Kushla, Extension Specialist.
. From The Overstory, Volume 2, Issue 4, November 2013, College of Forest Resources Extension Forestry.

Mississippi is blessed with a strong forest industry and a diverse wood products market. The markets for biofuels vary across the state. There is a charcoal plant in Glen, and a wood pellet mill in Amory. A plant in Columbus is distilling wood chemicals to sell to petroleum refineries, and Mississippi Power is buying wood for electric generation in southern Mississippi. As bioenergy develops, markets will grow as well.

What strategy should forest landowners use with regard to growing

biofuels? Biofuels for bioenergy generation is a developing market. Currently, the raw material for biofuels are wood waste (sawdust or mill scraps) or green chips. Both are low value products, and stumpage for biofuels will command a low price, much as for pulpwood.

The driving factor behind our present forest industry is for longer rotations to grow the higher value sawlogs, poles, and veneer. A forest landowner planning to grow these higher value products will be well positioned to take advantage of local markets for biofuels. The bioenergy market will most likely compete with pulpwood for the smaller wood that will be chipped. This includes thin-

ning in pine stands or timber stand improvement cuts in hardwoods. Therefore, growing for the longer rotation will give the forest landowner the most flexibility toward the developing bioenergy market.

As bioenergy markets develop, greater competition for raw materials may increase stumpage for biofuels. By the time a pine stand planted now is ready for its first thinning, the landowner may have the option to clearcut the timber if pulpwood prices relative to sawtimber are much higher. Overall, this points to a very important economic fact. Diversification of forest products is good for business, and good for the forest landowner.

Flu And Flu Complication Rise In Mississippi

Update from Mississippi State Department of Health.

The rate of reported influenza-like illnesses continues to rise in Mississippi, along with an increase in cases of complications associated with the flu. Flu complications can be serious and even deadly, especially in those who are already in poor health, or who have a chronic illness. Flu vaccination reduces your risk of getting the flu, and makes illness less severe if you do get the flu. Protect yourself now by finding a flu shot provider at HealthyMS.com/flu.

Follow this [link](#) for more on the Flu and Pneumonia.



FLU PREVENTION

- Wash hands frequently
- Cover your cough
- Stay home if you're sick
- Get your flu shot or flu mist.

(Continued from page 7, Forestry Commission Has A Number Of Goals)

Harlow said the forestry commission works with several agencies, represented on the state stewardship committee. Among those are Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, fisheries and Parks, Mississippi State University Extension Service, Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Service, and

other interested groups and organizations.

"Really it's a total effort where it all comes together," Harlow said. "We (the forestry commission) are considered timber and forestry management. It all comes back to what's good for the land."

Landowners who participate in the stewardship program are recognized with special signs on their property

and the state does offer incentives and tax credits to qualified landowners. The state recertifies stewards every five years.

For more information on the Mississippi Forestry Stewardship program, check out the commission's website at www.mfc.state.ms.us or call service forester Alex Harvey, 831-3359.

Tragic Wildfire Season Has Surprisingly Few Fires

Graph Source: U. S. Forest Service, National Interagency Fire Center.

The USA's 2013 wildfire season has been marked by stunning contrasts: It was not only the deadliest year for firefighters in 20 years - due to the tragic Yarnell fire in Arizona that killed 19 - but Colorado also endured its most destructive wildfire in state history. The year was also marked by a massive smoky blaze right at the entrance to iconic Yosemite National Park. Yet, at the same time, the number of wildfires across the country was at a 30-year low, and the number of acres burned was also well below average. Additionally, from an economic loss perspective, the year has also been well below average. Total economic damages in 2013 were approximately \$700 million, or 46% below the 10-year average of \$1.3 billion.

By Doyle Rice, USA Today, November 23, 2013.

As the USA's 2013 wildfire season comes to an end, it will be remem-

bered for being unusually quiet for the number of blazes but one of the deadliest for firefighters.

The tragic Yarnell Hill Fire in Arizona killed 19 firefighters, the highest death toll for a single fire in 80 years. Colorado endured its most destructive wildfire in state history. And the Rim Fire — a massive blaze near the entrance to iconic Yosemite National Park — was the largest ever in the Sierra Nevada.

Even so, the number of wildfires nationwide hit a 30-year low, according to data from the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise: As of Friday, just over 43,000 fires had been reported across the country so far this year, according to the fire center.

That is well below the 10-year average of nearly 68,000 fires and the lowest number since accurate record keeping began in the early 1980s, the fire center reports. The number of acres burned was also well below average.

The low number of fires and acres burned were due in part to for-

tuitous weather conditions: 2013 had neither of the atmospheric circulations usually associated with active wildland fire seasons, meaning the nation was neither in an El Nino nor a La Nina climate pattern, according to Ken Frederick, deputy chief of external affairs with the fire center.

Additionally, Southern California didn't get the fire-fanning Santa Ana winds this fall, and Northern California received substantial rain toward the end of summer, he said. "These factors, to some degree, resulted in a quiet year in terms of the acres burned and the number of fires," he added.

Meteorologist Steve Bowen of Aon Benfield, a global reinsurance firm, noted that by late summer, a very active Southwest monsoon pattern brought plentiful rainfall and moisture across the West. "In fact, the July-September period was the wettest in 119 years for the Four Corners region," he said.

From an economic loss perspective, the wildfire year has been well

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Mississippi Firewise

Posted by Michele Steinberg in Fire Adapted Communities.

Reporting on the numbers game of wildfire strikes me as very similar to reporting on the swells and ebbs of the stock market. How many, how big, how caused - what does it all mean? A year-to-year analysis of the number of reported wildfires and their size doesn't give us a good sense of trending, but in a year like 2013, it might provide some needed perspective.

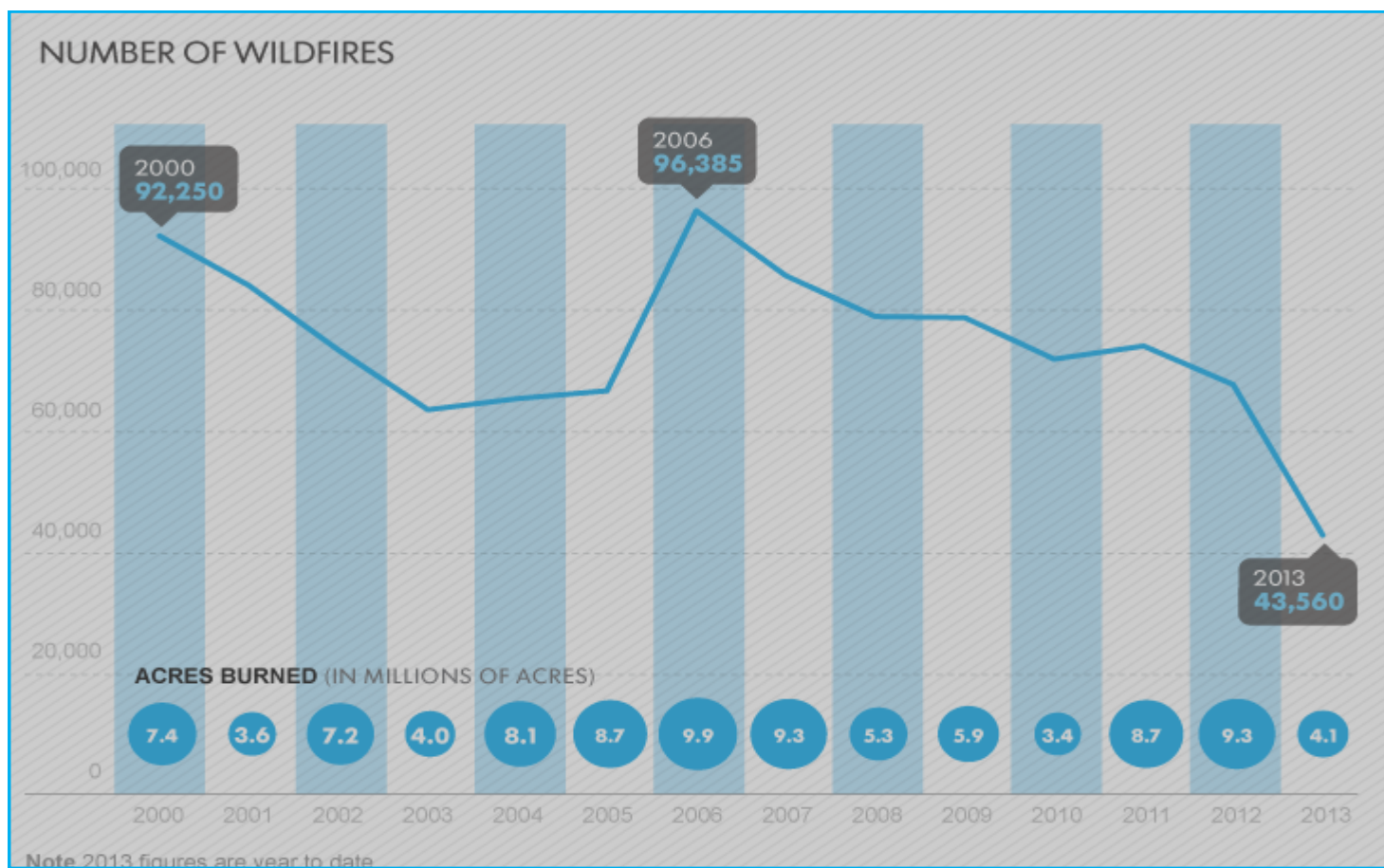
USA Today reporter Doyle Rice interviewed me last week for his retrospective on this year's season and

we had a good chance to discuss just what a year like 2013 meant. Fewer fires - the fewest in over a decade according to the National Interagency Fire Center - and a much smaller acreage burnt, according to the same news. So should we be jumping for joy? Not quite.

The devastating losses of people and property in Arizona, Colorado and other areas this year is one reason for sobriety in the face of a "slow" wildfire year. The impact on water supply, public health, and local economies is another. Weather patterns made 2013 an atypical year, but development patterns dating back 20-

30 years show us that even in years with fewer fires, catastrophic losses may be the new normal.

Wildfire is a natural phenomenon and is not going away. All the more reason for communities throughout the country to find out what it takes to adapt to the reality of wildfire and embrace wildfire safety principles that make a real difference in reducing risk.



(Continued from page 10, *Tragic Wildfire Season Has Surprisingly Few Fires*)

below average: "Total economic damages in 2013 were approximately \$700 million, or 46% below the 10-year average of \$1.3 billion," Bowen said.

Bowen said that \$500 million of that total was in the Black Forest Fire in Colorado.

Though there were fewer fires, they got a lot of attention because they were so dramatic and close to habitable areas. "The impacts of wildfire in the U.S. are not reliant strictly on the number of fires," said Michele Steinberg of the National Fire Protection Association. "The fires happened where people are living," affecting their safety and even their drinking water.

In 2013, fires occurred "in or near

urban/suburban areas such as Black Forest, Colorado and Prescott, Ariz., and fires impacting major watersheds that provide drinking water to metropolitan areas (San Francisco)," she said.

Frederick agrees: "Determining the severity of a fire season is subjective," he said. "Acres burned and the number of fires are not the best metrics for determining the severity of a fire season."

"In the wildland fire community, many associate line-of-duty deaths with fire-season severity," he added.

The 19 firefighters who died fighting the Yarnell fire in Arizona brought the national death toll to 34, the most since 1994, when 34 also died, according to spokeswoman Jennifer Jones of the U.S. Forest Service. The Yarnell fire was the worst wildfire tragedy in Arizona his-

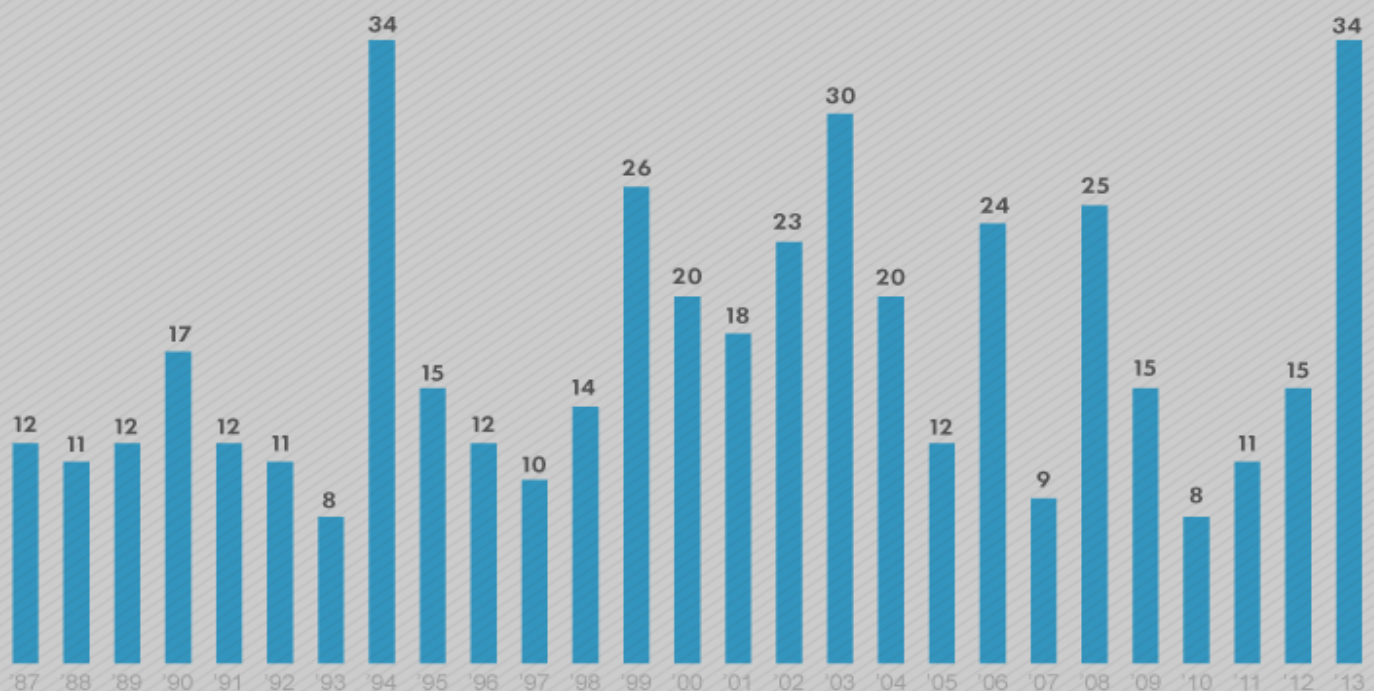
tory and the highest death toll from a single fire in the nation since 1933.

A year like this may be "the new normal," said Steinberg. "We've developed all of the desirable areas, and now we're moving into fire-prone regions."

She said there's been significant development over the past two decades in places that were not traditionally inhabited, such as woodlands, grasslands, bushlands and forested areas.

Also, as a result of the warming climate, there may be a reduction in the overall number of fires in the West, but the ones that form tend to be much larger, according to a recent report from the Arizona Department of Forestry.

FIREFIGHTER DEATHS



Note 2013 figures are year to date

(Continued from page 3, *How To Start The New Year Fresh*)

you.

3. **Focus on organization.** If you're already wonderfully organized, skip this step. But many people aren't and this can inhibit feeling like the new year is a fresh start.

- Are there piles of papers and books on the desk and floor? Clean them up in short bursts here and there (stealth cleaning!).
- Do you have trouble finding things, from keys to socks? Look for simple solutions, such as hanging up a key holder and setting up a special lost sock basket. One method is about training, the other is about acceptance—for example, you can train yourself to put things away but you can't account for missing socks until the mate turns up, so have a safe-keeping zone for such items.
- Hate cleaning? You could try to convince yourself it's exercise, a moment of Zen or a chance to throw out your mate's junk but it's better to find help. Delegate the cleaning jobs to others as much as possible and try to arrange it so that you're doing what you're best at. It's overwhelming to be the person responsible for it all, so stop trying.
- Take decluttering in gradual steps. Perhaps, first sort through your desk on Monday, organize your closet on Tuesday and Wednesday, go through your bookshelf on Thursday, on Friday vacuum, Saturday dust, and Sunday whatever you else needs to be organized. Once you've organized specific high-use areas,

you will realize it's much easier to concentrate and find what you need with a clean room.

4. **Relax more.** If you're not in the habit of relaxing, start the new year with a resolution to add this important activity (or lack of activity) to your life from now on.

- Spend a little time browsing through books and websites devoted to relaxation ideas. What sorts of relaxing opportunities appeal to you? Not everyone agrees that the same things are relaxing—some people find adrenaline-packed activities relaxing while others would rather slump in the hammock with a good book. It's your choice, just so long as it relaxes you.
- Almost everyone finds spa-style activities relaxing. This might mean a weekly bath by candlelight with big bubbles (and maybe some bubbly), a massage (at home with a loved one or paid for at a spa), yoga, meditation and the like.
- When you get a chance, take a relaxation break on Saturday or some other appropriate free day or afternoon. Get your rest, have some friends over for a spa party if you want, or just be alone. You can give yourself an oil treatment, manicure/pedicure, and whatever else will make you feel good and look good.

5. **Clean your work or study space.** Going back to work or college/school after the holiday break can leave you feeling a little out of sorts. Tidying up your desk, locker, backpack, or whatever else you have where stuff accumulates can help you to feel refreshed for the new year.

Throw out last year's junk, file away important information where it belongs and give everything a good dust or wipe down. Refill anything that you're running out of and if you can, place a pretty plant or photo on your desk to cheer yourself up.

- For backpacks, satchels, handbags, laptop carriers and other bags: Don't carry around unnecessary items! Things you don't need in the bag are clutter that increases the bulk and weight and might scratch items like laptops, phones and valuables.

6. **Reflect over the past year.**

Think about things you'd like to do better this year, new things you'd like to try and people you'd like to make amends with or start over with. Have you achieved the things you wanted to in the past year? What specific things would you like to change or redirect? Asking yourself questions about progress, change and where you want to be right now can help to keep your perspective fresh, giving you new motivation to make this year a more fulfilling one.

- Anything you regret saying? Anyone you wish you could apologize too? If there is, apologize and make things right with them. You don't want to worry or regret anything when you start the new year.
- Was this past year so great you don't want it to be a new year? Great, make a scrapbook or diary entry about how great this year has been. But tell yourself the new year will be even better. Build on the lessons you've learned and keep the good things coming.
- Was this past year such a terrible

(Continued from page 13, *How To Start The New Year Fresh*)

year for you that you worry the new year will be more of the same or even worse? Thinking that way may be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Nobody expects you to fly when your wings feel broken but it's important for your own well-being to start finding small ways to mend your dreams. Treat yourself with greater compassion and hang out more with folks who have kind hearts. Focus on making

this coming year a much gentler, kinder one. This might include letting go of things that are causing you anxiety—scary at first, but really liberating when you finally do it.

TIPS

- Promise yourself to do a weekly organizational check on your room/desk/car/whatever it is that gets you bogged down in mess, to prevent you from getting into that dysfunctional state of messiness.

- Think of the new year as the best year of your life when you start it.
- Most people equate the new year with eating healthier, exercising more and spending more time with your loved ones. While these may seem like platitudes, it's precisely because these basic things assure you of a more satisfying life through bringing you greater energy, closer ties to people you care about and feeling healthier.

Even More Traditions!!!

Soviet Union: The Soviet Union's New Year's Day celebrations have been greatly affected by the Union's history. As religion was suppressed and Christmas celebrations were banned, New Year's, or *Novi God* celebrations often include Christmas traditions such as decorated trees, which were reconsidered as New Year Fir Trees. As the suppression left, these traditions stayed part of the New Year's Day celebration. The holiday is also celebrated with feasts, champagne, and wishes.

Spain: Spaniards celebrate New Year's Day with the custom of eating twelve

grapes, each eaten at a clock-stroke at midnight.

England: The English custom for welcoming New Year is full of hospitality and warmth. They believe that the first guest for the year would bring fortune for them. He should be a male, should enter through the front door and bear some traditional gifts like loaf for the kitchen, drink for the head of the family and coal to light the fire, otherwise he is not allowed. They believe that these bring good luck throughout the year.

Denmark: In Denmark, residents keep a pile of dishes, all broken, in front of the door. For this they save old dishes and

People usually throw these on the friends' doors during New Year. This symbolizes friendship and brotherhood and they believe the one with maximum dishes outside, has the most friends. Some Danish are found to leap some chairs during midnight.

China: The Chinese have a unique way of celebrating New Year, where every front door of a house is painted in red which symbolizes happiness and good fortune. They hide all the knives for the day so that no one cuts oneself, because that may actually cut the entire family good luck for the coming year. However that doesn't make any difference to the feast they have during time.

Pantone Colors: Who and What

Every printer and designer knows that pantone colors govern everything if you want to get your colors right!

We're all familiar with Pantone's color chips, cheery blocks of color labeled with a numerical code. Pantone chips are icons of design, lately found everywhere from Christmas

ornaments to coffee mugs. But who is Pantone, and why have their colors taken on such authority?

Pantone started off around mid-century printing color guides for cosmetic companies. They would use around 60 different pigments and mix them to match the colors they were looking for. At that time, colors

were not yet standardized, so different printers had to kind of make vague guesses to match each other. The example people love to cite is Kodak. Remember that orange-yellow of Kodak packaging? Since colors weren't standardized, that yellow would look slightly different depending on where it had been

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printed. The company found that customers would opt not to buy Kodak film when the packaging was slightly darker than usual, since they thought it looked less fresh. The company needed their branded color to be consistent so that their sales could be consistent. So the demand arose for a new system of standardization for color printing.

In 1956 a young chemist, Lawrence Herbert, started working part-time for Pantone. In 1962, he bought the printing division of Pantone and began refining the color matching system.

Using his chemical expertise, Herbert found a way to reduce the basic building blocks of

printed color: instead of starting with 60 pigments and mixing via trial and error, as had been the protocol, he now worked with only 10 pigments, and created standard 'recipes' for printers to follow in order to achieve uniform results. This crucial development was called the Pantone Matching System, which is somewhat unfortunately known as PMS.

Herbert quickly expanded Pantone's reach into other industries beyond

printing, like textile design and fine arts materials in the '60s, and digital computing in the '70s and '80s. By 2001, they had expanded their color palette to 1,757 distinct hues. Constantly improving their technology and making licensing agreements with other producers, Pantone's colors are more varied and dynamic than other color techniques, meaning that the company is able to produce unusual colors like fluorescents (after a licensing agreement with Day-Glo). Pantone also works to make their colors consistent and available across all platforms, so col-

match the color of the actual bedspread when it comes in the mail.

In 2006, Pantone joined forces with a paint company, producing exterior and interior paints that correlate with some of their colors. Pantone is involved in all aspects of color, even producing color trend forecasts for the next year. These forecasts are invaluable to designers and printers in the industry. Pantone also announces a "Color of the Year" and announced cerulean blue as the color of the millennium.

Every season, experts at Pantone decide on the top colors in fashion for men and women. On Wednesday, September 4, 2013, Pantone revealed the top hues for spring 2014, and the No. 1 color for women may remind you of something.

The top color for women for spring 2014 is called "Dazzling Blue." It's the same as the nail polish Facebook sells in its office, called

"Social Butterfly Blue" and meant to match the company's signature blue. In addition to the Facebook color match, "Dazzling Blue" is the same color as the one used for the New York City bike share program, Citibike, Pantone tells Women's Wear Daily.

Pantone decides a season's color based on the season's runway looks at New York Fashion week. A total of 17.05 percent of designers used the blue hue in their spring 2014 fashions for women, WWD reported.



ors can match on textiles, printed paper, digital materials and other media.

The importance of Pantone in corporate design and branding is evident from the Kodak anecdote. Think about how much we associate colors with brands! Coke Red, UPS Brown, Tiffany Blue, Hermes Orange... And for those of us who aren't concerned with branding, we still want the color of the bedspread in the catalog to

Safety First . . .

Practical Workplace Safety Tips

The most recent statistics by OSHA report that 4,383 workers were killed on the job in 2012 alone. On average, more than 84 workers killed in week or nearly 12 deaths every day. (This is the second lowest preliminary total since the fatal injury census was first conducted in 1992.) 19% of those deaths occurred in the construction trades, with OSHA predicting that 435 of the 775 deaths in construction that year could have been prevented by keeping workplace safety tips in mind on the job. No matter what industry you work in, applying safety tips can prevent accidents.

Tips for Avoiding Slips and Falls: Falls are the leading cause of injury in the workplace. Keep these tips in mind to avoid an injury:

- As you walk, keep an eye on the floor in front of you for spills.
- If you see a spill, never just walk by it. Always clean it up or call someone to clean it up.
- Wear nonskid shoes when you work in kitchens, outdoors, or any other place where you will commonly be walking on slippery surfaces.
- Never climb on shelving units or storage units to get things. Use only approved ladders.
- Never lean on railings, even if they look solid. They could be improperly secured, and you could fall.
- Always use safety harnesses when working at heights.

Tips for Lifting Properly: You may work with patients who need help getting around or at a factory where you're lifting boxes on a continual

basis. No matter who or what you may be lifting, there are some key points to consider:

- If you are approaching a box and don't know what's in it, try moving it a little with your foot first to see how easily it moves. This will help you gauge how heavy the box is.
- Always wear nonskid shoes when you are lifting often or lifting potentially heavy objects.
- Never bend at the waist and lift the box up with your back. Keep your upper body straight and parallel with your lower legs. Grab the item and push up with your legs, not with your back.
- Never jerk your body around when lifting. You may feel fine after doing this once, but repeated occurrences can easily lead to injury in even the healthiest workers.

Fire Safety Tips: Some jobs carry an increased risk of fire, but understanding fire safety is important for any occupation. Keep these tips in mind:

- Have a fire plan in place for your worksite, and make sure your employees understand it fully. Having a fire drill every now and then is a good way for employees to keep escape routes, meeting spots, and procedures in mind.
- Avoid the use of so-called "power strips" whenever possible. They are often prone to overuse and can start a fire if too many appliances are plugged into them.

- Keep cleaning chemicals and other work chemicals in a well-ventilated room. Many chemicals emit vapors that are highly flammable and which can be set off with something as small as a spark from a faulty wire.
- Know where all the fire extinguishers are throughout your worksite and know how to use them.
- Remember that grease fires cannot be fought by dousing them with water. Oil is hydrophobic and also is the fuel source in grease fires. Water will simply splash the oil around and spread the fire even further.

Planning For A Safe Workplace: Falls, lifting injuries, and fires are dangerous and common in the workplace, but that's just the beginning. There are many possible safety issues that can occur at your office or factory. Sometimes the best workplace safety arises out of simple good planning and smart thinking.

Putting It All Together: In the end, workplace safety is the responsibility of everyone at your job. Everyone has a part to play in keeping the workplace safe and free from unnecessary dangers and risks.

By keeping these tips in mind and sharing them with others, you will be doing your part in keeping injuries, and possibly deaths, from happening on the job.

First Time, Every Time